

# National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office

## 2014 Strategy and Operational Review



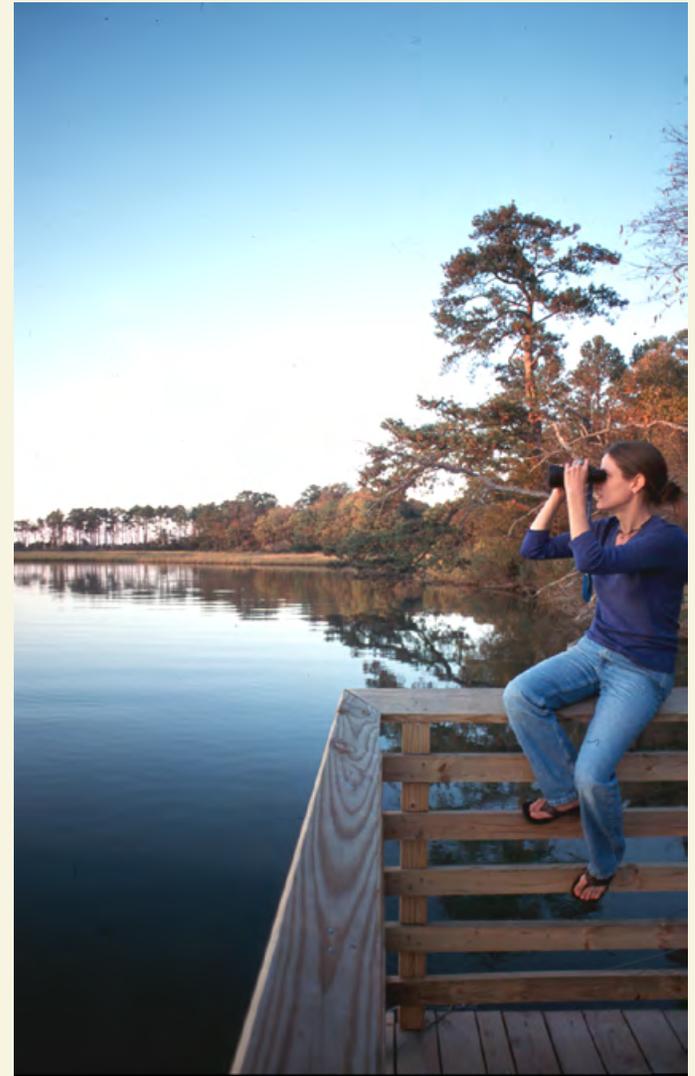
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### **Business Planning in the National Park Service**

The purpose of this report is to clearly communicate the financial and operational status of the National Park Service (NPS) Chesapeake Bay Office to principal stakeholders. This report answers such questions as: What is the purpose of this office? How does the office operate? What are its goals and priorities over the next five years? How does it allocate its resources to achieve its goals? By articulating the objectives and operational and financial management of the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office, this report provides a basic foundation for future planning while familiarizing readers with the range of dynamics that shape the office.

**National Park Service Mission:** *The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and intrinsic values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world.*



*No one picture can capture the diversity of the Chesapeake Bay region or the partnerships within which the National Park Service works. The images in this document convey just a glimpse of the place and that work. Like here at Hoffer Creek, the NPS partners with many sites to help people access and learn about the Chesapeake's natural areas.*

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*From top: Easton, Maryland: A group gathers for educational programming at Pickering Creek Audubon Center; Henrico, Virginia: Chesapeake Youth Corps participants clear a tidal creek at Presquile National Wildlife Refuge; Stratford, Virginia: Stratford Hall Plantation on the Potomac River is the birthplace of Robert E. Lee.*

## Letter from the Superintendent

When Captain John Smith explored the Chesapeake region from 1607 to 1609, he was stunned by the world he encountered. He marveled at its natural resources—rich with fish, forests, wetlands, oysters, and vistas—as well as the people he found living here. “Heaven and earth,” he wrote, “never agreed better to frame a place for man’s habitation.”

By the time Smith sailed the Chesapeake Bay, American Indians had lived in the region for thousands of years. Four centuries have passed since Smith’s voyages, yet throughout that time the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed have remained at center stage in the nation’s story. Many of our founding fathers—George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe and James Madison—were from the Chesapeake region. The climax of the American Revolution, the birth of America’s national anthem and its flag, the heart of the Civil War—all these things belong to the Chesapeake. Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglas were both great leaders born and formed here. Our earliest canals, the National Road, the nation’s capital—all are in the Chesapeake watershed. This list just scratches the surface.

The setting is the bay itself: the largest estuary in the western hemisphere. It is a network of great rivers—Susquehanna, Potomac, Rappahannock, James, Nanticoke and more—and landscapes throughout a watershed reaching from Norfolk, Virginia to Cooperstown, New York. Although much has changed since Smith’s era, the region’s ecological, cultural and economic importance is unchallenged. Internationally significant for fisheries and wildlife, the Chesapeake is the focus of long-standing conservation and restoration efforts. The watershed’s 18 million residents expect this; they want the Chesapeake’s waters clean, and its scenery, heritage, and wildlife to be enjoyed by this and future generations.

The National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office connects people to experiences of the natural and cultural heritage of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers. We help to conserve special places important to visitors, residents, and the nation. We do this in multiple ways, always in partnership with many, many others.

Through the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail—the first national water trail—we connect people to Smith’s voyages, to the region’s rich American Indian culture, and to the region’s natural landscapes, still evocative of four hundred years ago. As the John Smith Trail develops further it could become a water-based analogue to the Appalachian Trail. Along the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail we connect visitors to the events and legacy of the War of 1812 in the Chesapeake. Through the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, we link visitors with hundreds of sites around the watershed that tell pieces of the Chesapeake story. We also support collaborative partnerships to expand the number of places people can get to and on the water and to conserve special Chesapeake landscapes—both high priorities for citizens. In combination, these resources and efforts provide visitors and residents with a national park experience of the richness the Chesapeake region has to offer.

This overview describes our mission, goals, programs and operations. It also points to where we envision our efforts in the future. We look forward to continuing this exciting and important work with our many partners.

**Chuck Hunt**  
Superintendent



*Chuck Hunt, Superintendent,  
NPS Chesapeake Bay office.*

***“Heaven and earth  
never agreed better to  
frame a place for man’s  
habitation.”***

**—Captain John Smith**

## Introduction to the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office

### Introduction to the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office

The Chesapeake Bay region represents a rich mixture of ecological, historical, and cultural values. The Bay itself is the nation's largest estuary, a stressed but incredibly productive water body that serves as a pillar of tourism, recreation, and commerce. Its rivers, wetlands, and forests nurture a diverse collection of aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. When allowed to thrive, this interwoven system also provides a suite of ecological services that benefit human communities—by protecting the quality and quantity of our drinking water; promoting air quality; combating the effects of climate change; and reducing the pollution, erosion, and flood events related to stormwater runoff.

History resonates on the Chesapeake landscape. Marshlands, deep forests, farmsteads, wharves, and main streets trace the earliest stories of our nation, from the stirrings of the Revolution to many crucial Civil War battles. Even today, the Chesapeake landscape retains vast areas evocative of this rich indigenous and national heritage. Millions of modern families and individuals, including contemporary American Indians and rural communities that rely on farmland and forestry, live amidst this backdrop.

Set within this vast 64,000 square mile watershed—an area eighteen times the size of Yellowstone National Park—are 55 units of the National Park System, scores of state parks and wildlife refuges, five national trails, several large national heritage areas and additional state heritage areas, and more than 2,600 miles of designated water trails.

From a headquarters in Annapolis, Maryland, the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office manages three partnership-based entities—two extensive national trails and a network of sites and water trails—that connect people to experiences of the region's natural and cultural heritage, and also help conserve important landscapes. This office also coordinates watershed-wide efforts to achieve land conservation, public access, and citizen stewardship goals established under President Obama's Executive Order 13508 (*Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*) and the Chesapeake Bay Program.

### Mission

The National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office connects people to experiences of the natural and cultural heritage of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers. We help to conserve special places important to visitors, residents, and the nation, for this and future generations.



*Great rivers flow toward the Chesapeake from six states and the District of Columbia, creating a 64,000-square-mile watershed. These rivers—like the Potomac here at Riverbend Park—are the lifeblood of the bay and the focus of recreation, conservation and the region's heritage.*

## Key Themes

Throughout the development of this report, the following themes emerged:

1

### **Integrated and Far-Reaching Programming.**

The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office manages three distinct yet integrated partnership entities across the 64,000 mile watershed—the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail—and receives appropriated funds to operate them. These three programs, in addition to the office's other partnership activities, all work to achieve a mission of conserving important landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and connecting people to the variety of natural, cultural, and recreational experiences within it. The programs are therefore highly integrated and interrelated. For instance, financial assistance awarded through the Gateways and Trails appropriation may directly support a project benefitting the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, and sites in the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. Office staff frequently work on projects across all NPS Chesapeake Bay Office programs, creating an integrated approach to conservation, interpretation, and access across the Chesapeake.

2

### **Necessity of Partnerships.**

The Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, the original program of the office, set a roadmap for placing partnerships at the center of the office's strategy. Multiple federal and state agencies, over 250 land trusts, and 55 national park service units operate within the watershed. From trail advisory councils, to the Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership, NPS is a convener and a collaborator. The Chesapeake Bay Office pursues its mission and objectives through extensive collaboration with state, local, and non-profit partners throughout the watershed. Office staff located in the field allow NPS to further extend its reach and make partnerships personal despite a landscape that crosses six states and the District of Columbia.

3

### **Operating at Multiple Scales.**

In order to accomplish goals effectively, the office approaches its mission on multiple scales—the local, regional, and watershed level. For instance, the Chesapeake Bay Office engages locally to assist hundreds of cultural and natural sites along the trails with interpretation, education programs, trail marking and expansion of water access points and soft launches (those supporting paddle craft, motor, and/or sail boats). Staff members connect and conserve on the regional level through managing and supporting national historic trails that traverse individual tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay. The office also functions on the watershed scale, one example of which is convening the large landscape partnership to promote collaborative conservation throughout the watershed. For visitors and partners this results in a multi-level National Park Service presence, with on-the-ground (or water) trail experiences linked to robust visitor opportunities and programs across the watershed.

## Key Themes (continued)

4

**Entrepreneurial and Dedicated Staff.**

Despite having a small staff size (15.6 full time equivalents<sup>1</sup> in FY 2012 managing a budget over \$4,160,000), the office has proven adept at balancing independent and collaborative work. The Chesapeake Bay Office has capitalized on opportunities to make tangible impacts in the watershed with limited resources through strategic implementation of program goals with partners. Staff members are predominately generalists and flexibly support multiple programs.

5

**Office in Transition.**

After 15 years representing the National Park Service, the office continues to move from initial development towards stability. Partners look to the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office for guidance and leadership, as well as financial and technical support. External expectations have changed, and the role of the office has shifted. Staff have focused on initial planning and development of trails, gateways, and other initiatives. As staff complete this initial planning and groundwork, future programs and activities may focus more on direct conservation, stewardship, programming, management, and promotion.

*The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office works with far-reaching partners and programs to engage people with the region's stories, heritage and special places. Here, rangers from Fort McHenry talk in Havre de Grace, Maryland about origins of the national anthem along the Star-Spangled Banner Trail.*



<sup>1</sup>One FTE is equivalent to 2,080 working hours per year.

## History and Evolution of NPS in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

### History and Evolution of NPS in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Collaborative efforts to conserve the Chesapeake landscape have evolved over time, as has the role of the National Park Service in the region. Two distinctive trends have influenced this evolution:

- Long-standing public demand for protecting special regional landscapes and sites has manifested in innovative state, federal and non-governmental programs and a mosaic of targeted landscape conservation efforts within the watershed.
- Public concern over the ecological health of the Chesapeake Bay, originally focused exclusively on pollution reduction, has grown to recognize the importance of land conservation.

The National Park Service began managing lands in the Chesapeake region in the 1920s and 1930s and now owns over 320,000 acres in the watershed, making it the second largest federal agency landholder in the region, after the US Forest Service. Interest in a possible National Park Service Chesapeake unit dates back to 1993, when NPS conducted a special resource study that highlighted opportunities for technical assistance and interpretation to connect people to the Bay's natural and cultural history. In 1998 Congress authorized the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, authorizing NPS to provide technical assistance and make matching grants to state and local governments and non-governmental organizations, in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

*NPS trails, parks and partners span the Chesapeake watershed. In particular, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (in purple) extends throughout the tidal Bay and to the headwaters of the Susquehanna and James Rivers.*

## History and Evolution (continued)



In 2003, the NPS established a Chesapeake Bay Office to coordinate its engagement with the watershed and the many partner entities managing sites there, and initially to administer the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network and several planning activities, including a second special resource study requested by Congress. Completed in 2004, the study found the Chesapeake Bay to be nationally significant, recommended the permanent authorization of the Gateways Network, and determined that one or more park concepts could make significant contributions to the protection and public enjoyment of the Chesapeake. Since then, Congress established the more than 2,000 mile Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (NHT) and the 560 mile Star-Spangled Banner NHT. Responsibility for administering these trails was delegated to the Chesapeake Bay Office, fundamentally changing the role of the office.

Concurrently, there has been a three-decade effort to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. These efforts, which have historically focused primarily on water quality improvements, have been coordinated through the Chesapeake Bay Program, in which the NPS office participates as a partner. Established in 1983, this regional partnership among watershed states, the District of Columbia and the federal government is coordinated by the EPA and staffed by employees from a number of federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations and academic institutions.

National Park Service and Chesapeake Bay Program efforts sit within a context of state conservation programs, non-governmental organizations, other federal landholdings, scores of state and local parks and refuges, and multiple state or federally-designated landscape areas. These result in a broader conservation and public access landscape that includes eight million acres of protected lands—20 percent of the Chesapeake watershed.



*From top: The diverse landscapes and maritime heritage of the Chesapeake region have long been a focus of conservation efforts. In 1954, Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas (pictured) led a 184 mile walk along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, garnering national attention for its conservation. Increasingly, the National Park Service plays an important role in collaborative conservation, public access and citizen engagement.*

## History and Evolution (continued)

In 2009, President Obama signed Executive Order 13508 (*Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*) declaring the Chesapeake Bay “a national treasure constituting the largest estuary in the United States and one of the largest and most biologically productive estuaries in the world.” The order directed the U.S. Department of the Interior to develop a report describing landscapes and ecosystems in the bay region that merit recognition for their historical, cultural, ecological, or scientific values; opportunities for conserving these landscapes and ecosystems; and options for expanding public access to the bay and its tributaries. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office led this effort, convening a watershed-wide collaboration on land conservation, public access, and youth stewardship in 2009.

The 2010 *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* set out a watershed-wide goal for land conservation and public access: “Conserve landscapes treasured by citizens to maintain water quality and habitat; sustain working forests, farms and maritime communities; and conserve lands of cultural, indigenous and community value. Expand public access to the bay and its tributaries through existing and new local, state and federal parks, refuges, reserves, trails and partner sites.” It also set specific outcomes for achievement by 2025: protect an additional two million acres and add 300 new public access sites along the water. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office is responsible for coordinating efforts among many partners towards these ends, as well as for implementing numerous specific actions detailed in the strategy.

## Programs and Responsibilities

### Programs and Responsibilities of the Chesapeake Bay Office

The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office manages the following trails and programs:

#### Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (John Smith Trail) commemorates the voyages of Captain John Smith and his crew as they explored the Chesapeake Bay between 1607 and 1609. America's first national water trail, the 2,000-mile John Smith Trail was established in 2006 in close coordination with the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. The trail traces Smith's routes and the key rivers linked to them, helping visitors imagine the world he encountered more than four hundred years ago.

Visitors enjoy intimate surroundings and scenic vistas reminiscent of the Chesapeake region in the 1600s, including coves and marshes, ribbon-like tributaries, and secluded woodlands. They learn about the American Indians who interacted with Smith and the ways in which this critical contact period forever changed the Chesapeake region and the people who have called it home. Visitor opportunities along the trail continue to grow. In addition to managing and operating the John

Smith Trail, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office works with public and private partners to create more water trails and shoreline recreation sites, protect historic areas, and create exhibits and educational programs.

#### Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

The Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail (Star-Spangled Banner Trail), designated in 2008, traverses 560 miles of land and water routes in the Chesapeake region of Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia along which British armies and American defenders travelled and fought during the War of 1812. The trail traces troop movements through historic places, landscapes, charming waterfront towns, and waterways. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office administers the Star-Spangled Banner Trail and jointly manages it through partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies; War of 1812 Bicentennial commissions and committees; and private organizations in Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.



*The John Smith Trail connects visitors to places and stories associated with the American Indian heritage of the Chesapeake region. Indigenous peoples were here long before John Smith, and their descendants still live and celebrate here, such as at this event at Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum.*



*Fell's Point National Register Historic District, a partner on the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, still has many of the homes of former seamen, schooner captains, and privateer owners dating to the War of 1812 era. Baltimore, Maryland.*

## Programs and Responsibilities (continued)

### Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network

The Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network (Gateways Network), established through the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998, is an extensive partnership system of over 170 of the Chesapeake Bay's special places and 3,000 miles of designated water trails. These parks, refuges, maritime museums, historic sites, and water trails each tell the story of the way that water, place, nature, and people have been connected over time. The primary goals of the Gateways Network are to connect people with the region's resources, enhance public access, and foster citizen stewardship of the Chesapeake. While the Gateways Network has evolved over time, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office has always played the core, integrating role, coordinating overall communications and linkages. Partners have successfully leveraged their participation in the Gateways Network to increase visitation; to improve the quality of their work; and to attract volunteers, funding, and other support.

The two trails and the network share geography, resources, and partner sites complementing one another to address multiple themes and values. The deliberate administration of the trails and network through the Chesapeake Bay Office provides opportunities for efficiencies in developing the full range of programs supporting these entities: communications, interpretation, education, youth engagement, access development, management, and conservation. The Chesapeake Bay Office works closely with many partners to provide technical and financial assistance that enhances, expands, and promotes visitor offerings at locations along the trails and the network.



*NPS Chesapeake Bay provides technical and financial assistance to partner sites along the national trails and Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails. Here, the Sultana Education Foundation leads education programs along the trails.*



*NPS support for teams like Virginia's Youth Conservation Corps engages young people in building projects along the national trails and learning about Chesapeake heritage.*

### Recent NPS Chesapeake Bay Office Accomplishments

The programs of the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office are highly interrelated in nature, all serving the same mission of connecting people to experiences of the Chesapeake's natural and cultural heritage and conserving important places in the watershed.

#### In 2012, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office completed:

- The launch of the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, coinciding with the release of a companion history and travel guide, Junior Ranger program, trail brochure, and interpretive workshops for trail partners.
- The free and official NPS mobile application Chesapeake Explorer, helping visitors find partner sites along three national trails and the Gateways Network.
- New interpretive and educational programming, including traveling exhibits, soft launches, classroom materials, and stewardship messaging, partially funded by the NPS and developed through partners.
- Robust educational resources including an online library of curricula and primary source documents, a residential professional development program for teachers, and a Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program for the Star-Spangled Banner Trail.
- Chesapeake Youth Corps partnerships in Virginia and Maryland engaging youth in trail development projects at state parks, national wildlife refuges, and historic sites.
- The *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan*, with 320 potential new access sites identified by citizens, stakeholders, and state and local partners.
- Completion of a *Conservation Strategy for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail*, to prioritize lands for conservation relative to the visitor experience.
- Over 50 new orientation kiosks and interpretive waysides, and 100 miles of marked land route along the Star-Spangled Banner Trail.
- Designation by the Secretary of the Interior of four new "historic connecting components of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail" along four river segments.
- Implementation of multiple projects along the John Smith Trail called for in the James River Segment Plan, including new signage and public access sites.
- New map guides to the Sassafras and Chester River segments of the trails.

## Programs and Responsibilities (continued)



There are many special places like the South Mountain Conservation Landscape (above) in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. More than forty organizations collaborate through the Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership to help protect these places.

### Achievements of the Large Landscape Conservation Partnership

Participants in the Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership have accomplished a series of significant milestones since the partnership's inception in 2009, all convened and facilitated by the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office. Results of collaborative efforts include:

- LandScope Chesapeake ([www.landscape.org/chesapeake](http://www.landscape.org/chesapeake))**  
 LandScope Chesapeake is a publicly accessible mapping tool reflecting conservation priorities within the Chesapeake Bay watershed at the non-governmental, local, state, regional, and federal levels. LandScope Chesapeake is coordinated by the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office, NatureServe, and USGS through a memorandum of understanding established in 2012.
- Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan**  
 The plan assessed the demand for public access, barriers to access, and gaps in the access system. It provides a new inventory of existing public access sites and identifies approximately 500 potential new sites that partners are now working to fund and develop. NPS coordinates annual tracking and updates as well as overall collaboration to implement the plan.
- Rivers of the Chesapeake Collaborative Initiative (Land and Water Conservation Fund-LWCF)**  
 The National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service and Chesapeake Conservancy have collaborated with national and local land trusts and other partners to advance proposals to conserve over 21,000 acres along five river segments. These proposals build on community-based landscape conservation and seek to fulfill resource restoration, cultural heritage, recreation, and working landscapes preservation goals.
- Advancing Indigenous Cultural Landscapes**  
 The National Park Service has convened a group of partners to further efforts to document Indigenous Cultural Landscapes (ICL), large landscapes evocative of the natural and cultural resources supporting American Indian lifeways and settlement patterns in the early 17th century. Most recently, pilot ICL mapping efforts are underway along the lower Susquehanna and Nanticoke Rivers.

Each of these ongoing efforts is specifically identified in the *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*, required by EO 13508.

### The Chesapeake Bay Program and Executive Order 13508

The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP), established in 1983 under the Clean Water Act, coordinates conservation and restoration of the bay watershed among the federal government, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Delaware, New York, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. A series of agreements signed by the Chesapeake Executive Council has set out collective conservation goals for guiding efforts and improving the environment, particularly in terms of bay water quality.

President Obama's 2009 *Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration Executive Order* increased federal commitments and leadership within the Chesapeake Bay Program effort. One result is a greater federal involvement in achieving goals for habitat restoration, wildlife, land conservation and public access—in addition to water quality.

Through its long-standing role in land conservation, natural and cultural resource management, and connecting the public with special places, the National Park Service brings a unique set of attributes to the Chesapeake Bay Program. As a result, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office coordinates collaboration through the program and the executive order to advance land conservation and public access to the water—protecting an additional two million acres and adding 300 new public access sites by 2025. The *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* sets out specific actions for the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office to carry out to help achieve these goals and connect citizens with the Chesapeake.

### The Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership (LLC Partnership)

One particular way the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office works to further efforts stemming from Executive Order 13508 is as the co-convenor of a broad set of large landscape conservation partners who assemble and collaborate to achieve shared goals. The Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership is a collection of federal agencies, state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private sector organizations focused on advancing large landscape conservation efforts in the Chesapeake watershed in a strategic and collaborative way. The partnership has met in person annually since 2009 and has increasingly held virtual meetings between annual sessions. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office also convenes a series of working groups of the LLC Partnership, including a Public Access Action Team that serves to coordinate watershed-wide public access planning and implementation efforts. Additionally, the office regularly brings together a distinct set of partners to support Chesapeake Youth Corps collaboration in the watershed. This effort advances an inclusive approach to engaging youth ages 18–24 from diverse backgrounds in site and landscape-level conservation work.

## Case Studies of Chesapeake Bay Office Partnerships

### James River Association

For over 13 years, the National Park Service and James River Association have been close partners in helping people of all ages enjoy and protect the James River. The James is Virginia's largest river and one of the Chesapeake Bay's largest tributaries, flowing 340 miles across the state and providing drinking water, commerce, and recreation for over one-third of the state's population. JRA began development of the James River Water Trail in 2002 with a map and guide for the lower James, and since then additional resources and interactive interpretive materials have been created. As the local management organization for the water trail, JRA is a partner in development of this segment of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. JRA has spearheaded educational outreach, stewardship planning, and public access planning. Collaborative projects among JRA, the NPS, and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation have led to the placement of interpretive signage at 20 sites and directional signage at over 30 sites to improve accessibility for trail visitors. In 2013, the Chesapeake Bay Office and JRA are partnering again to develop and plan new public access on non-tidal portions of the Chickahominy River, further expanding the James River Water Trail and opportunities for visitor exploration.

The James River Ecology School—a partnership of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the JRA—provides place-based education and service-learning at a residential camp for groups of all ages, but especially underserved youth. Here, campers and visitors can identify aquatic and terrestrial species diversity while learning about Captain John Smith's historic journey and American Indian communities of the region. In 2010, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office and JRA entered into a cooperative agreement to launch the project *Paddling into the Past: A Wetlands Exploration* to construct a 514-foot boardwalk trail, a canoe/kayak launch, and outdoor classroom pavilion, enabling the expansion of environmental education programs and eco-paddle canoe trips, to 495 individuals in a single year. This serves as just one example of a completed cooperative project between the organizations.

The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office's partnership with JRA enables the NPS to meet national historic trail, youth corps, and executive order goals through the work of local partners. It also supports the goals and enhances the ability of JRA to expand access to and foster an appreciation for the James River and the natural and cultural ecosystems it supports. These projects collectively demonstrate a multi-year, phased approach to trail development, which leverages limited federal, state, and local resources for maximum impact.

*The James River Association engages kids in learning about the river along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.*



## Case Studies of Chesapeake Bay Office Partnerships (continued)

### Working with National Park Units

National parks provide primary access points and information gateways that raise the visibility of national trails across the Chesapeake Bay. These NPS units, through their friends groups and partner organizations, leverage financial and technical assistance from the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office to expand their reach and capacity and to connect them thematically with related sites and landscapes in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

At Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine in Baltimore, Maryland, visitors learn about the events that inspired the penning of the country's national anthem; the fort is a key location on the Star-Spangled Banner Trail.

The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office's relationship with the Friends of Fort McHenry and park staff spans a decade and has enabled reconstruction of historic features at the star-shaped fort, wetlands restoration, interpretation of natural and cultural features, and a canoe/kayak launch to facilitate water access to the site. Additionally, an interpretive brochure, curriculum-based educational programming, and the launching of an online virtual resource center, hosted by Maryland Public Television, help Fort McHenry connect teachers, students, researchers, and historians to the events and outcomes of the War of 1812 on the Chesapeake.

The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office has also had a long relationship with Piscataway Park on the Potomac River in Maryland, and their partner organization the Accokeek Foundation. The park sits along both national historic trails. Shared effort has led to expanded interpretation of natural and cultural features, and development of a waterfront trail, bird observation blind, canoe/kayak launch, fishing pier and boat dock that significantly improve site access for people of all abilities. This long partnership has increased communication and coordination with the Piscataway Indians, leading to interpretation of the ancestral Piscataway presence at the site, and fostering ongoing collaboration on programming and identification of significant indigenous cultural landscapes.

At Fort Monroe National Monument in Hampton, Virginia, an ongoing project with the Fort Monroe Authority has enabled construction of a fully accessible kayak/canoe launch supporting on-water programming for youth from underserved communities nearby. Work includes design of improvements to parking, accessible routes, and beach access to prep for future construction. The sites will provide signage orienting visitors to the John Smith Trail and the Star-Spangled Banner Trail and nearby places to visit. While of short duration, this partnership models national parks' leveraging of NPS Chesapeake Bay Office goals, programs, and investments to expose new audiences to the region's assets and engage them in stewardship of special places.



## Case Studies of Chesapeake Bay Office Partnerships (continued)

### The City and Museums of Havre de Grace

The city of Havre de Grace, situated on the Susquehanna Flats in the upper portion of the Chesapeake Bay is steeped in American history. The city hosts six museums—broadly representative of the area’s cultural and natural heritage—that are along the trails. Local heritage resonates with many of the core Chesapeake themes and those of the Captain John Smith Trail and Star-Spangled Banner Trail, as well as the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office’s long-standing technical and financial assistance relationship with the city of Havre de Grace and its museums has evolved with the designation of the national trails and the growing role of the NPS in the Chesapeake. Several early projects led to site-specific interpretive products, while more recent awards have supported projects dealing with broader local stories associated with the national trails.

In 2008, the Havre de Grace Maritime Museum entered into a cooperative agreement with the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office to develop a museum exhibit and outdoor interpretive panels to educate school groups and visitors about the indigenous people of the upper bay. A Maryland state bond bill and other funds were used as match to unveil *Beyond Jamestown – Life 400 Years Ago*, an exhibit that has become a core educational resource for the community. The quality of the exhibit has attracted a growing audience to a small museum and brought an important local and national story to life. In 2010, the city partnered with a local museum in another project to produce interpretive and educational products and programs in each of the six museums, throughout the city’s historic downtown, in schools, and in nearby Maryland communities. Through that project—*Star Spangled 200: Havre de Grace under Fire*—community volunteers helped document Havre de Grace’s early 1800s history and its role in the events and outcomes of the War of 1812, helping to jump start the Star-Spangled Banner Trail experience in the area.

Today, the city proudly markets the learning and recreation opportunities it provides as a destination along the national historic trails. Investments in interpretive media and programming have been good business. Now, through a 2013 award, Harford County, in cooperation with Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway, has launched the planning for a waterfront heritage park on the Susquehanna River in Havre de Grace, to serve as an upper bay heritage gateway to the John Smith Trail and the Star-Spangled Banner Trail. As part of comprehensive planning for the heritage park, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office is providing financial assistance for the planning and design of public access facilities for viewing, launching canoes and kayaks, and other waterfront recreational activities.

*Partners in Pennsylvania have led the development of extensive water trails along the Susquehanna River and its tributaries. NPS technical and financial assistance has helped with many projects.*



## Case Studies of Chesapeake Bay Office Partnerships (continued)

### Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership

Over 500 miles of the Susquehanna River provide the Chesapeake Bay with fifty percent of its fresh water (24 million gallons) on a typical day. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is a participating partner in the multistate effort to conserve and restore the Chesapeake watershed, and has committed to the specific goal of expanding public access to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Since 1988, NPS involvement in the Chesapeake Bay watershed has focused on water trail development as an effective context for establishing partnerships and connecting the public to their local rivers. The designation of the John Smith Trail in 2006 further confirmed the NPS role in water trail development in the watershed. In 2012, the John Smith Trail was extended to include the full extent of the Susquehanna River, to Cooperstown, New York.

With an active statewide water trails program, Pennsylvania is a national leader in the development of water trails. Seven water trail segments in Pennsylvania, coupled with one designated water trail in Maryland and two in New York, encompass the entire Susquehanna system. The positive economic collateral that is generated for a locality when creating experiential learning and recreational activities on these water trails has broadened the range of stakeholders interested in the Pennsylvania water trail network. A growing number of localities have self-identified as “river towns” and celebrate their re-emerging connection to their rivers. Through the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership, the NPS and Pennsylvania state resource agencies work together to support local water trail managing organizations.

The Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership is the first of its kind for the Chesapeake Bay Office on a state level and has made great strides in facilitating water trail management on the local level. The NPS has provided technical assistance through the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office as well as the Rivers, Trails, & Conservation Assistance Program, including training on topics such as volunteer recruitment and management, natural resource management and stewardship, public access site development, project compliance and permitting, and low-impact development. Financial assistance through the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office has furthered the general development and sustainability of water trails; and more recently, specific priority has been given to public access development. Through the Pennsylvania Water Trails Partnership, the NPS and Pennsylvania state resource agencies coordinate and focus their collective efforts to facilitate local water trail development and integrate Pennsylvania statewide goals and outcomes with those of the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office.



## Strategic Goals

The mission of the National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office to “connect people to experiences of the natural and cultural heritage of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers and to conserve special places important to visitors, residents, and the nation, for this and future generations” provides a framework for long-term priorities, goals, and activities that bind the Chesapeake Bay Office’s various initiatives together, and links the office’s work in a clear and permanent way to the mission of the National Park Service.

To accomplish its mission, the Chesapeake Bay Office works at multiple scales through national trails, watertrails, and individual sites:

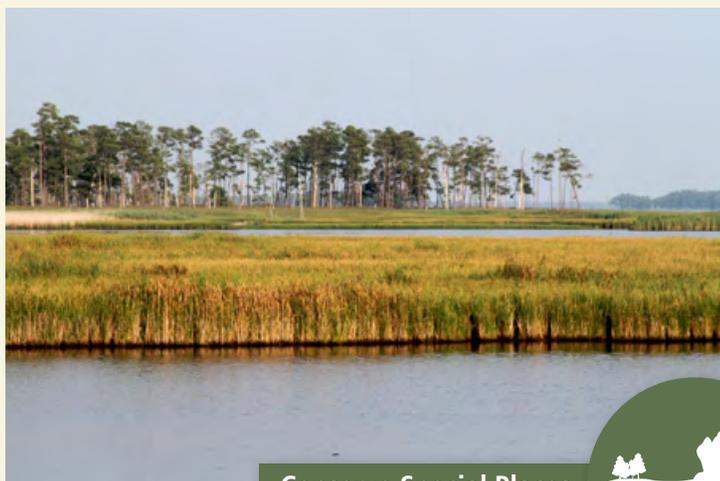
**Working Watershed-wide:** The national trails provide physical frameworks in the 64,000 square mile watershed through which NPS Chesapeake Bay organizes its interpretation, promotion, access, and conservation work on a watershed scale. Executive Order 13508, the Chesapeake Bay Program, and the NPS mission position the Chesapeake Bay Office as a convener for large landscape conservation and public access in the watershed. The Large Landscape Conservation Partnership convened by the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office brings public, private, non-profit, and citizen groups together around shared conservation and access goals. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office and partners plan and carry out strategies for public access and landscape conservation on a watershed scale, and promote authentic Chesapeake experiences to connect visitors to the watershed’s natural and cultural heritage.

**Working Regionally:** The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office collaborates with multiple partners around land and river corridors along the national trails. These large landscapes, such as the tidal James or lower Susquehanna, are a manageable size for strategic trail planning and management. At this scale, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office coordinates development of segment plans, works to connect public access sites to trail themes and resources, creates maps and guides for visitors, and collaborates in conservation efforts.

**Working Locally:** The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office works with hundreds of partner sites along the national trails to develop new public access sites, install interpretive signage and trail kiosks, initiate new interpretive and educational programs, and conserve important sites. This builds visibility for the trails, creates site-specific trail experiences, and builds a local presence for the NPS in hundreds of places throughout the Chesapeake region.

Strategic Goals (continued)

The four strategic goals of the Chesapeake Bay Office are interconnected and interdependent:



Conserve Special Places



Expand Access



Partner, Collaborate, and Manage



Connect People to Experiences



## Strategic Goals (continued)



### Expand Access

**Outcome:**

Increased access to the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers for public recreation.

**Watershed-wide Measure:**

Meet and surpass executive order goal of 300 public access sites by 2025.

**Strategies:**

**3–5 Year Activities:**

**Support watershed-wide collaboration to plan, track and implement increases in public access.**

- Work with partners to prioritize areas throughout the watershed for new access sites and access improvements.
- Develop promotional materials to communicate to Chesapeake Bay watershed residents the value of public water access and the locations of existing access opportunities.
- Coordinate quarterly updates with partners to assess progress in access.

**Increase public access along national trails and designated water trails.**

- Provide funding and technical assistance to partners in priority areas to support projects that increase and improve launch sites, observation decks, and sites for active and passive water-based recreation.



### Connect People to Experiences

**Outcome:**

Residents and visitors have access to, are aware of, and participate in diverse interpretive, educational, and recreational opportunities along the Chesapeake and its rivers.

**Watershed-wide and Regional Measures:**

Increased recreation on the bay and its tributaries; downloads, clicks, distribution of National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office communication materials; number of interpretation and education programs offered by partners; number of Teacher-Ranger-Teacher programs; enrollment in Youth Conservation Corps.

**Strategies:**

**3–5 Year Activities:**

**Promote available interpretive, educational, and recreational opportunities in the watershed.**

- Incorporate interactive and virtual media into NPS Chesapeake Bay Office and partner communication, interpretation, and educational programming, using multiple mediums to support visitor experiences of national trails.
- Develop and maintain central NPS Chesapeake Bay Office web and mobile applications on interpretive, educational and recreational experiences in the watershed.
- Design, develop, and install trail-marking and orientation signage along trails and at partner sites.
- Develop and disseminate publications, brochures and maps to the public that describe the trails and other resources in the watershed.
- Encourage adoption of complementary media and messaging by partners through technical assistance, informal outreach, and financial support.

**Expand the amount and range of interpretive and educational programs offered by partners and NPS that focus on the national trails.**

- Develop and implement a collaborative strategy for stimulating partner provision of trail interpretive, educational, and recreational experiences meeting NPS standards.
- Develop targeted interpretive media and programming at sites along national trails.

**Engage teachers and students in educational experiences that increase their knowledge of stories, resources and values along national trails.**

- Collaborate with partners to develop curriculum that connects under-represented stories (American Indian, African American, et cetera) and values to large land conservation efforts and trail interpretation.
- Develop Teacher-Ranger-Teacher programs.
- Introduce teachers in the watershed to the trails and how to access teachers' resources.
- Develop educational resources for teachers and students and train teachers on the cultural and historical values of the Chesapeake Bay.

**Engage youth through conservation volunteer and work opportunities.**

- Increase the number of participants in Youth Conservation Corps.
- Increase the diversity of Corps projects that support National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office priorities.

## Strategic Goals (continued)



### Conserve Special Places

**Outcome:**

Conservation of priority landscapes and significant resources, especially those contributing to visitor experiences and public access.

**Watershed-wide Measure:**

Meet and surpass executive order goals for two million additional acres protected at the watershed level by 2025.

**Strategies:**

**3–5 Year Activities:**

**Support watershed-wide progress towards large landscape conservation. Collaboratively conserve significant resources and evocative landscapes that support visitor experiences.**

- Coordinate a Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation (LLC) Partnership with representation from land trusts, private partners, and diverse groups.
- Identify and increase public and private financial resources available to the LLC partnership for large-impact land conservation projects throughout the watershed.
- Provide technical assistance to private landowners and funds to partners to incentivize projects which increase the quantity and quality of protected viewsheds from both land and water.

**Acquire and manage selected, highly strategic, iconic resources along national trails.**

- When goals are aligned, leverage joint-funding opportunities with LLC partners to fulfill NPS conservation and recreation priorities.
- Develop criteria for utilizing a range of protection measures from direct ownership or management to easements or other support.
- Work collaboratively with owners of iconic properties and other partners to plan for and fund long-term protection.

**Identify and share information on important cultural and ecological landscapes.**

- Define conservation and visitor priorities through segment plans along the John Smith and Star-Spangled Banner Trails.
- Work with NatureServe, United States Geological Survey, the Chesapeake Conservancy and other partners to enhance and increase usage of LandScope.
- Conduct a review of tools and technology for collaborative and coordinated conservation.
- Inventory and map the cultural, historical, ecological, and recreational resources of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers.



### Partner, Collaborate, and Manage

**Outcome:**

Highly engaged partners and the NPS collaboratively conserve special places, increase public access and support meaningful connections between people, places and Chesapeake heritage and create national park experiences along the national trails.

**Watershed-wide, Regional and Local Measures:**

Leverage and increase the amount of resources; partners indicate satisfaction in benefits derived from collaborations; National Park Service Chesapeake Bay Office goals for partner engagement are accomplished annually.

**Strategies:**

**3–5 Year Activities:**

**Support collaborative partnerships through non-monetary and financial assistance to advance conservation, recreation, interpretation, public access, environmental education, and stewardship in the watershed and along trails.**

- Convene trail advisory councils regularly.
- Support annual meetings with the Chesapeake LLC Partnership and regular meetings of its stewardship team and work groups.
- Collaborate with the Chesapeake Bay Program to advance land conservation and public access goals and strategies.
- Carry out collaborative trail-planning efforts, such as segment planning, to further long-term partner engagement in making the trails real and managing them over time.
- Support partners to create more volunteer opportunities for constituents.
- Provide opportunities for partners not receiving financial assistance to share knowledge and connect with the Chesapeake Bay Office.
- Work with partners, park units, and outfitters along water trails and access sites in the watershed to increase recreation and guided interpretive opportunities.
- Provide financial and technical assistance, outreach and field visits, and collaboratively developed programs to target underrepresented groups (including American Indians, youth, adults, urban residents, and minorities).

## Fund Sources

### Fund Sources

This section presents information on federal fiscal year (FY) 2012, the most recent year for which complete budget and expenditure information is available.

During FY 2012, the Chesapeake Bay Office managed a budget of \$4,160,128. While some specific fund sources may vary from year to year, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office's budget can be broken out into the following three categories: 1) Appropriated Base, 2) Competitive/Project Funds, and 3) Other Fund Sources.

#### 1) Appropriated Base

The Chesapeake Bay Office receives two types of annual appropriations for its core budget, which form the office's most stable source of funding.

*Operations of the National Park Service (ONPS):* The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office receives a portion of its annual budget from the Operations of the NPS ("ONPS") base. ONPS base is annually included in the President's budget and appropriated by Congress. This funding totaled \$991,611 in FY 2012 (24 percent of the total Chesapeake Bay Office operating budget). The office receives three separate ONPS base allocations for 1) Chesapeake Bay Office operations (48 percent of the total ONPS base), 2) the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail (37 percent), and 3) the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail (15 percent). Between FY 2008 and FY 2012 the office's appropriated base budget grew at an average annualized rate of 0.07 percent.

*National Recreation and Preservation (NR&P):* The Chesapeake Bay Office receives a significant portion of its annual budget through a National Recreation and Preservation (NR&P) allocation for "Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails." Across the National Park Service, the NR&P appropriation provides for a broad range of activities related to outdoor recreation planning, technical assistance, natural and historic preservation, recreation data collection, and similar activities. For the Chesapeake Bay Office, the NR&P appropriation for Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails is specifically for implementing the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, and collaborative federal, state, and local strategies to support Executive Order 13508 for the protection and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails has been included in the President's Budget in each of fiscal years 2012–2015. In FY 2012, NR&P Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Trails totaled \$1,996,510 (48 percent of the Chesapeake Bay Office's total budget).

#### 2) Competitive and Project Funds

The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office routinely receives funding from several sources, typically awarded through a competitive process, to support specific projects related to conservation, public access, interpretation, education, and youth. The amount of funding received through these accounts can vary significantly from year to year. Given their competitive and project-specific nature, these funds form a less predictable source than appropriated base. In FY 2012, total funding from these sources amounted to \$835,099 (20 percent of the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office's total budget for FY 2012). Sources include:

*Operations of the National Park Service, including:*

(1) Connecting Trails to Parks (CTTP): This annual ONPS account supports projects linking national historic and scenic trails with national parks and other federal facilities. In FY 2012, CTTP funds for the office totaled \$137,143.

## Fund Sources (continued)

(2) Youth Conservation Corps (YCC): YCC supports summer programming that engages youth in conservation projects, such as trail construction, pest and exotic weed control, landscaping, and beautification and planting. The Chesapeake Bay Office received \$135,000 in FY 2012 to support the Chesapeake Youth Corps (CYC) interns and summer teams.

(3) Challenge Cost Share (CCSP): This program increases partner participation, preservation, and improvement of NPS natural, cultural, and recreational resources along national trails, with one-third of CCSP funding set aside for National Trails System projects specifically. As a matching fund program, CCSP requires at least an equal match of cash, goods, or services from non-federal sources. In FY 2012, CCSP funds for the office totaled \$53,781.

*Federal Lands Highway Program (FLHP):* In FY 2012, the Chesapeake Bay Office received one-time funding of \$451,502 from Federal-aid Highway funds from the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. These funds, which assist development and management of national scenic byways and recreational trails, supported one-time creation and installation of interpretive and orientation signage along the Star-Spangled Banner Trail in preparation for the bicentennial of the War of 1812.

*Construction-Management Planning:* The NPS construction appropriation provides funding for general management planning. The Chesapeake Bay Office received \$57,673 in planning funding in FY 2012 to support a portion of final development of the comprehensive management plan for the Star-Spangled Banner Trail.

*Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):* Federal LWCF funding supports direct purchase of lands or conservation easements by the National Park Service. Parks, national trails, and, recently, large landscape conservation collaboratives annually submit specific acquisition priorities for potential appropriations. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office includes conservation priorities in the Land Acquisition Ranking System and also coordinates submission of joint NPS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and US Forest Service priorities for the Rivers of the Chesapeake LWCF Collaborative. While the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office received no LWCF funds in FY 2012, it was awarded \$1 million in FY 2013 for land protection along the John Smith Trail.

### 3) Other Fund Sources

*Reimbursables:* These funds result from cost-recovery for services provided to other federal or cooperating agencies through interagency agreements. Reimbursable expenditures totaled \$333,191 in FY 2012. This amount came from two agreements with the Environmental Protection Agency, including \$248,636 for providing labor for web development and \$84,555 for providing watershed support and educational programming. Only the latter agreement for watershed support and educational programming is anticipated to continue beyond FY 2013.

*Revenue:* The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office currently receives very limited revenue, all of which is entirely dependent on donations. In FY 2012, the office expended \$3,667 from a donation received from a corporate foundation to support development and installation of an orientation kiosk for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail at Smithfield, Virginia.

## Programmatic Areas

### Programmatic Areas

The Chesapeake Bay Office expends funds to meet operational needs and specific strategic goals and activities that advance the office's mission. This segmentation of FY 2012 expenditures according to strategic goals is as follows:



#### Expand Access

A core goal for the office is expanding public access to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, especially along the national trails and water trails. In FY 2012, the Chesapeake Bay Office expended \$1,247,446, or approximately 30 percent of its total budget, toward this activity area. This included \$266,248 in in-house staff time and \$981,198 in non-personnel expenses, including financial assistance awards and contracts. Major activity areas of this work include overall access planning and coordination as well as access site project implementation.



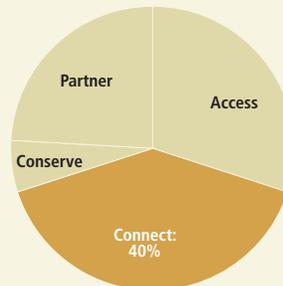
#### Connect People to Experiences

A second core goal for the office is providing a variety of means for connecting visitors and residents with experiences of the natural and cultural heritage of the Chesapeake watershed, especially along the national trails and water trails. In FY 2012, \$1,666,034, or approximately 40 percent of total NPS Chesapeake Bay Office expenditures, was dedicated to this activity area. This included \$1,301,942 in in-house staff time and \$364,092 in funding for contractual expenses, including financial assistance awards. Major activity areas of this goal include interpretation, education, Chesapeake Youth Corps, and promotion and communications.



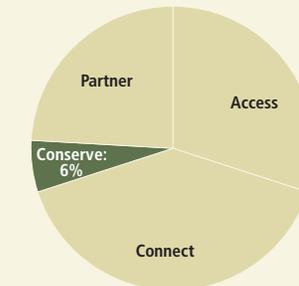
#### Conserve Special Places

The third core goal for the office is helping to conserve special places within the Chesapeake watershed important to visitors, residents, and the nation, for this and future generations, especially along the national trails. In FY 2012, approximately 6 percent of total Chesapeake Bay Office expenditures was dedicated to this goal. This included \$87,540 in in-house staff time and \$156,835 in non-personnel expenses, including financial assistance awards. In general, this strategic goal is a newer and growing area of emphasis, and therefore reflects lower activity levels in comparison to the other NPS Chesapeake Bay Office goals. Major activity areas of this work consist of Large Landscape Conservation Partners coordination, landscape value identification, and land conservation implementation.



**Connect Budget, FY 2012**

■ Connect: \$1,666,034



**Conserve Budget, FY 2012**

■ Conserve: \$244,375

Programmatic Areas (continued)

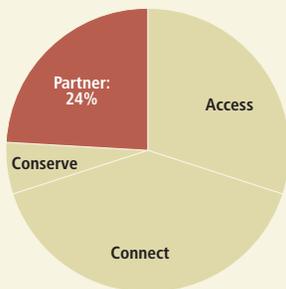


**Partner, Collaborate, and Manage**

This final core Chesapeake Bay Office goal differs from the others, in that it supports almost all of the office’s work and each of the three other strategic goals (see diagram on page 17). It pertains to engaging Chesapeake Bay Office partners in a range of networks that collaboratively maintain significant sites and initiatives. While specific aspects of this partnership work are aggregated in the categories described above (e.g. Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership coordination), other aspects are inherently cross-cutting and not attributable to just one of the other three goal areas and are grouped in this final strategic goal category. These include trail Advisory Council support, tribal partnership support, trail planning and compliance, and participation in the Chesapeake Bay Program. In FY 2012 the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office dedicated approximately 24 percent of total office expenditures, or \$1,002,373 to this goal. This included \$708,974 in in-house staff time and \$293,399 in funding for contractual expenses, including financial assistance awards.

**Administration**

Administrative and overhead costs associated with operating the office and its staff are included within these four programmatic areas. These expenditures include general administrative personnel costs, office supervision, staff leave, utilities, supplies, training, and travel. When separating these administrative costs from their respective programmatic areas, approximately 16 percent of total office expenditures in FY 2012 were dedicated to administration and general management of the office. This included \$571,583 in in-house staff time and \$103,013 in funding for contractual expenses and direct purchases.



**Partner Budget, FY 2012**

■ Partner: \$1,002,373

## Programmatic Areas (continued)

This table illustrates the allocation of FY 2012 resources by activity area.

Activity Area	Description	Direct Financial Assistance Provided to Partners	% of Total FY 2012 Expenditures*
<b>Expand Access</b>			
Access Site Project Implementation	Implementation of site-specific public access development projects, including planning, design, permitting, and construction. Examples include new canoe, boat, and kayak launch sites along the national trails.	•	27%
Overall Access Planning and Coordination	Coordinating watershed-wide public access planning, tracking, and collaboration. This includes coordinating the intergovernmental Public Access Action Team, developing and updating the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Public Access Plan, tracking progress toward achievement of the access goal, and carrying out other access planning initiatives.	•	2%
<b>Connect People to Experiences</b>			
Interpretation	Development and delivery of interpretive programming and media, such as interpretive books and guides, interpretive wayside exhibits installed at key sites, geocache trails along the national trails, and work with partners to develop and carry out live interpretive programs and tours.	•	22%
Chesapeake Youth Corps (CYC)	Work engaging youth in a conservation career ladder, including coordination of the partners participating in the CYC Network; support for CYC intern team located at several partner organizations; planning, coordination, and support for CYC summer youth teams doing conservation work along the national trails.	•	8%
Promotion/ Communications	Development and delivery of web, mobile, social media, news, print, and other vehicles for promoting trails and trail sites. Examples include www.smithtrail.net, www.starspangledtrail.net, www.baygateways.net, the Chesapeake Explorer mobile app, Bay Journeys, unigrid maps and guides for each trail, and other media.	•	7%
Education	Development and delivery of programs for teacher development, curriculum and resources, and student engagement. Examples include teacher development workshops related to the national trails, trail stewards programs, Teacher-Ranger-Teacher engagement, Junior Ranger, and curriculum and resource development.	•	3%
Trail Marking	Marking trails from major access roads for visitor ease in locating trail sites.		<1%

\*These percentages change annually depending on funding levels of the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office.

## Programmatic Areas (continued)

Activity Area	Description	Direct Financial Assistance Provided to Partners	% of Total FY 2012 Expenditures
<b>Conserve Special Places</b>			
Landscape Value Identification	Identification, documentation, and publication of important landscape values. Examples include mapping of indigenous cultural landscapes; mapping and assessment of evocative landscapes; identification of conservation values; and development of LandScope Chesapeake.	•	3%
Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership (LLC) Support	All activities related to convening and coordinating the Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership.	•	2%
Land Conservation Implementation	Development and implementation of specific land conservation opportunities and projects along the national trails. Examples include coordination of Rivers of the Chesapeake LWCF Collaborative; collaboration with partner organizations on specific conservation projects; and direct work with landowners on conservation priorities. This is the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office's newest area of work.		<1%
<b>Partner, Collaborate, and Manage</b>			
Trail Planning and Compliance	All trail-wide and segment planning and compliance activities for the national trails and water trails. Examples include development and updating of comprehensive management plans, segment plans, connecting trail nominations, water trail planning, and compliance activities related to proposals that may impact the trails.	•	17%
Chesapeake Bay Program Participation	Coordinating and participating in the Chesapeake Bay Program, including participation on the Management Board and Principals' Staff Committee; coordination of the Goal Implementation Team; support and participation in the Federal Office Directors' Group; and development of action plans and progress reports.		6%
Advisory Council Support	Support and involvement of Advisory Councils for both national trails. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office serves as the convener and organizer of meetings and conference calls for each council.		2%
Tribal Partnership Support	Coordination and consultation with American Indian tribes along the John Smith Trail.		<1%

## Expenditures by Type

### Expenditures by Type

In addition to programmatic and strategic goal focus areas, Chesapeake Bay Office expenditures can be categorized in one of four ways: cooperative agreements, contracts, direct purchases, and employee salaries and benefits (see chart at top right).

#### Employee Salary and Benefits

In FY 2012, approximately 43 percent of total office expenditures (or \$1,774,709) was allocated to employee salary and benefits. Total hours worked by all employees roughly equated to 15.6 full-time equivalents (FTE), calculated based on 2,080 working hours per employee, per year. In FY 2012, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office employed 23 staff members—seven permanent full-time and part-time employees who work year-round, and 16 “Term” employees who are hired on short term appointments (typically for four year periods). The greater number of term employees provides the office with a degree of financial flexibility, however, given the short-term nature of the position type, the office risks a loss of continuity and institutional knowledge. However, effort to address this is underway. Four employees work from “field locations” to expand the staff’s geographic reach; three are located in Virginia and one in Pennsylvania. The main office’s central location in Maryland provides the ability to work directly with partners throughout much of the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office’s geography.

The chart at bottom right depicts how NPS Chesapeake Bay Office staff time was directed to advancing the office’s strategic goals and activity areas in 2012, through technical assistance to partners on joint projects, development and delivery of education programs, writing and editing of interpretive signage, carrying out trail planning efforts with partners, and more.

## Expenditures by Type (continued)



*NPS technical and financial assistance helps carry out diverse programming and projects including Chesapeake Youth Corps teams who build their muscles working on trail development.*

### Cooperative Agreements

The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office utilizes cooperative agreements to provide financial assistance in support of joint collaborative projects or activities where both the receiving partner and the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office have substantial involvement. These agreements play a central role in achieving the full scope of NPS goals and strategies. Activities carried out through cooperative agreements include: developing public access sites, producing new interpretive products, carrying out youth programs, and trail planning and resource assessments. Staff members typically provide substantial technical assistance in each and every project accomplished through a cooperative agreement. Following commitments made as a result of Executive Order 13508, the Chesapeake Bay Office dedicates a substantial portion of financial assistance through cooperative agreements to support public access site development; this occurs through an annual call for proposals for access site planning and development. Financial assistance awards are described in more detail in the following section.

In FY 2012, approximately 35 percent of total office expenditures (or \$1,471,154) was allocated as financial assistance through cooperative agreements.



*NPS staff help partners plan, design and carry out many projects, including this new universally accessible launch at Bladensburg Waterfront Park, Maryland.*

### Contracts

The Chesapeake Bay Office contracts directly with private sector entities for various services that supplement or expand the capacity of in-house staff to carry out NPS goals and strategies. These services include a range of activities: design and fabrication of trail kiosks and interpretive signage, design and development of the Chesapeake Explorer mobile app and [www.starspangledtrail.net](http://www.starspangledtrail.net), trail planning, writing of content for visitor products, and IT support services.

In FY 2012, approximately 17 percent of total office expenditures (or \$714,188) was allocated through contracts to private sector entities.

### Direct Purchase

Direct purchases are used for acquisition of smaller amounts of goods or services or in a few cases for direct transfers between federal agencies. Examples include office supplies, phone service, copier maintenance, travel, and motor pool.

In FY 2012, approximately 4 percent of total office expenditures (or \$200,077) was spent on direct purchases.

## NPS Chesapeake Bay Office Partner Assistance

### NPS Chesapeake Bay Office Partner Assistance

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network all rely on partnerships for developing and maintaining programming and management along their routes. National Park Service technical and financial assistance to partners plays a key role in advancing the trails and network over time. Both the National Trails System Act and the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 authorize the National Park Service to provide technical and financial assistance.

Since 2000, NPS Chesapeake Bay Office financial assistance has facilitated government investments and partner matches totaling over \$33 million in more than 285

projects focusing on interpretation, education, stewardship, visitor centers, map guides and brochures, youth engagement, water and historic trail development, and public access.

Initially, financial assistance related solely to the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network. With the establishment of the national trails in 2006 and 2008, financial assistance began to address trail projects as well. President Obama's Executive Order 13508 added special emphasis on expanding public access and youth programs. Financial assistance recipients include non-governmental organizations, local or state governments, and colleges and universities.

### 2012 Cooperative Agreements:

Funds awarded:  
**\$1,482,930**

Average award size:  
**\$59,317**

Award size range:  
**\$10,048 to  
\$169,500**

Total partner match:  
**\$1,424,899**



*NPS financial assistance supports diverse projects including signage and launching facilities at public water access sites along water trails.*

## NPS Chesapeake Bay Office Partner Assistance (continued)

Chesapeake Bay Office staff also provide technical assistance through a broad range of staff-partner interactions to advance a variety of mutual goals. These include NPS staff assisting with:

- Designing interpretive products
- Delivering of teacher training related to the trails
- Evaluating, planning and designing public access sites
- Coordinating collaborative trail conservation projects
- Convening partner trail planning processes
- Providing capacity-building and training workshops
- Providing compliance consultations and technical materials

The combination of financial assistance, technical assistance, and wealth of information available through NPS Chesapeake Bay Office programs has taken a number of organizations from infancy to credibility and has raised the effectiveness of partner outputs. Partners have described their association with the national trails and Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network as “transformative.” Simultaneously, the projects implemented as a result of this assistance have been essential to making the national trails and watertrails tangible for visitors and residents alike.



*The NPS works with many different partners on collaborative initiatives and technical assistance. With the Maryland Geocaching Society, NPS launched dozens of geocaching sites along both the John Smith and Star-Spangled Banner trails. The popular initiative has driven many new visitors to discover trail sites.*

### All Chesapeake Bay Office Cooperative Agreements and Non-Federal Matching Funds, 2000–2013

**Chesapeake Bay Office  
Financial Assistance**

#### **1.26 Leverage Ratio**

Partners leverage every \$1 of Chesapeake Bay Office financial assistance into \$1.26 in additional matching funds.

**Total Awarded, with  
Matching Funds**

## NPS Chesapeake Bay Office Partner Assistance (continued)

The bar graph at right illustrates the amount of financial assistance provided through Chesapeake Bay Office cooperative agreements since 2000. Most of the fluctuations result from changes in Congressional appropriations for the Chesapeake Bay Office over time. For several years the Chesapeake Bay Office has successfully competed for various project or initiative funding (such as youth program funds), which has resulted in additional financial assistance awards.

NPS Chesapeake Bay Office financial assistance generates substantial matching contributions from recipients. A conservative tracking process documents an average \$1.26 of matching non-federal contributions for every \$1.00 of NPS financial assistance (see illustration on previous page) provided between 2000 and 2013. Matching amounts are likely even higher; matches for recent and still open financial assistance awards are included on the basis of the initial project budget. When projects close out, the actual final match is calculated; this is generally higher than the initial budgeted match, and rarely lower.

The pie graph at right illustrates the purposes towards which cooperative agreements have been allocated from 2010 through 2013.

## Conclusion



*Many locations along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail retain the feeling and appearance of what the Chesapeake may have looked like four hundred years ago.*

### Looking Ahead

Moving forward, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office will continue improving its ability to connect people to experiences of the natural and cultural heritage of the Chesapeake and conserve for future generations the many values of the expansive watershed. Much of what is accomplished requires good operational and financial planning, and leveraging limited resources towards focused goals and objectives.

There are clear opportunities ahead:

- Chesapeake Bay Program:** A new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement among states, the District of Columbia and the federal government will foster attention and collaboration on far-reaching conservation goals. Through management strategies relative to land conservation, public access, interpretation, education, and youth engagement, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office will play a key role in advancing Chesapeake Bay Program goals for the foreseeable future.
- Expanding capacity through partnerships:** Partnerships will continue to provide the most effective means for achieving almost every goal. In particular, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office will pursue efforts with potential to significantly increase capacity to connect visitors with the trails. Examples include working to build a network of trained interpretive guides and front-line staff, capable of raising the visibility and relevance of the trails to many more people than the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office can alone.

## Conclusion (continued)

### Looking Ahead (continued)

- **Protecting special places:** Four hundred years after John Smith's journeys, there remain many iconic sites and landscapes evocative of long ago. Permanent protection of some of these sites has the potential to create NPS or partner-managed land-based portals to the trails that further expand visitor opportunities, recreation, and heritage tourism, while also catalyzing and leveraging further conservation nearby. The NPS Chesapeake Bay Office will work closely with partners to conserve these special places.
- **American Indian heritage:** The cultural heritage and landscapes important to American Indians are less understood and less commemorated in the eastern United States than in the west. The rich history, tribes and descendant communities of American Indians in the Chesapeake watershed presents significant opportunities for engaging visitors and citizens along the trails.
- **Building off the 1812 bicentennial:** Significant public attention on the bicentennial of the War of 1812, including numerous high profile events in the Chesapeake region between 2012 and 2014, has launched the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail in a highly strategic way. The network of partners and enthusiasm built in this period has created an exceptional base for sustaining the trail over time.
- **Attention on access:** The long-standing issue of limited public access to the bay and its rivers has received heightened attention in the past several years. Public demand for access, including universal accessibility, has focused partnership efforts. With two extensive water-based trails and responsibility for coordinating watershed-wide access planning, the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office will play a key role in advancing this cause.
- **Engaging youth:** Connecting young citizens with the outdoors, the water, trails and parks is a major national public agenda item for the coming decade. Chesapeake Bay Office programs, including partnerships with youth conservation corps and school districts around the bay, provide significant opportunities for growing youth engagement with the Chesapeake.
- **Large landscape conservation:** Across the nation, collaborative efforts are focusing on conserving important large corridors and landscapes that maintain cultural heritage and ecological functions. The Chesapeake has a rich tradition of innovative conservation leadership spanning more than a hundred years. Evolving collaboration through the Chesapeake Large Landscape Conservation Partnership holds promise for advancing that innovation further in the coming years.

NPS Chesapeake Bay Office staff will work closely with hundreds of partners to make the most of these opportunities. Ultimately, they lead toward making the trails more visible and relevant to the public. The trails and the network of places they tie together bring a national park experience of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed to visitors, students, educators, communities, conservationists—people seeking a personal connection with a landscape that is also nationally important.

Just as the Appalachian National Scenic Trail has catalyzed conservation and brought cohesion to a 2,200-mile corridor, this work is doing the same in the Chesapeake. NPS involvement in partnerships watershed-wide to advance conservation, interpretation, education and expanded access can catalyze action, resource stewardship and cohesion around a shared sense of purpose, centered on the cultural and natural importance of the watershed.

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*The vast Chesapeake landscape holds many places that draw people to the water, including here at Jug Bay Natural Area along both the John Smith and Star-Spangled Banner Trails.*



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